

# STRANGE ADVENTURE OF A FEMALE ROBINSON CRUSOE

Girl Lives on Desert Island in the Indian Ocean for Fifteen Months.

## IS SHIPWRECKED BY A TERRIBLE TYPHOON

Pet Lion Her Sole Living Companion—Is Finally Forced to Kill Animal to Save Own Life—At Last Rescued by a Passing Vessel and Returned to Parents.

The story of Robinson Crusoe and his remarkable adventures is familiar to almost every man, woman and child. To read the old story that truth is stranger than fiction, and if anything her experiences were more remarkable. One day on an almost desert island in the middle of the Indian ocean, Crusoe on his own resources, Liela Ponquet, a pretty young trapeze performer, was about 18 years of age, lived for 15 months before she was rescued by a passing vessel and finally sent back to her home in France.

When she arrived at Marseilles she was reunited with her father and mother who for nearly two years she had believed dead, and who believed she had perished when the little French bark Lilly sank on December 18, 1902. They had passed when the little vessel, after a brave fight with the typhoon, had sunk. They had seen her lifted on a wave, with a life preserver clasp about her, and they had fought with the waves in the boat for a chance to save their daughter. She had caught one glimpse of her as she was buried under a huge wave, and then they parted.

Nearly four days later the boat had reached one of the Hebrides, off New Caledonia, and after a day or two of rest and preparation had crossed to the desert island and reached safety.

An Acrobat Family. The Ponquet family—father, mother and daughter—were acrobats and animal trainers, and Liela, the father, had for many years been the leader of a little circus, sometimes with a dozen or more men in his employ, sometimes with only the members of his family to assist him in giving performances. His eldest son, a promising acrobat, had been killed at a fall in France by fall-

They went to New Zealand and traveling along the coast from Palmerston through Christchurch, Timaru, Nelson, over to Wellington, on the North Island, they arrived at the menagerie.

Shipwrecked by Typhoon. Early in December they were ready. They loaded the tents, and the animals, and all aboard the Lilly and started for Melbourne. The typhoon struck on December 15 in the morning and for over three days the little vessel, under bare poles, fled before it. The men exhausted and worn from working the pumps, fell fainting. Three times they tried to turn and ride in the face of the storm, but could not. They were driven northward, always northward—lost, hopeless and dying.

And during it all Liela helped the men, and when they fell from exhaustion she worked at the pumps, strong, vigorous, tireless, her athletic training standing her in good stead. On the 18th the vessel was abandoned. The storm was abating a little, but the vessel was floating heavily and had lost its buoyancy. At ten o'clock sea after sea pounded upon the decks, and still the vessel staggered on.

The tired vessel, worn out by the battle with the sea, gave up about noon. The steering gear broke. The little barkentine turned broadside, swallowed a few moments and sank.

The Ponquet fortunes were swept away, and the family separated, in an instant. The father and mother reached the boat, but Liela, with seven others, was swept overboard.

Alone on Desert Island. Then began the strange career of the girl. She remembers struggling in the water; then she lost consciousness; how long she was in the water she does not know. It could not have been long. She was aroused by being buried upon sand. She felt the wave that had cast her up, and she lay on her back, and she began to get scarce for food, and she began to get scarce for shelter, and she began to get scarce for a sense with which to catch fish in the lagoon between the island and the reef.

Also from her scant supply of pins and hairpins she fashioned little hooks that she set to catch gulls.

Burns Seaweed as Signal. For nearly three weeks she lived without fire. Again and again she tried to make fire by rubbing sticks together, as she had heard of savages doing, but she failed, and she was in despair. Then she saw a fish and she began to think of the unknown plants that she found began to pull upon her, and she determined to have fire at any cost. She hunted the island over for stones that would make sparks when she struck them together, and finally on the beach she found two large pieces of flint. It took two days for her to set fire to a little bunch of dried, cottonlike pulp from a weed she found, and then she blew and fanned it into a flame and fed it constantly.

The evening that she got fire she was happy, and she declares that she believed her battle won. Wood was scarce, but she resorted to dragging seaweed from the lagoon and leaving it to dry on the beach, and over the burning seaweed she piled wet seaweed and kept a great smudge burning at the highest point of the island.

Mons—the lion—kept her from becoming desperate from loneliness, but after a month he became dangerous. The diet of raw fish and oysters and pieces of sea gull did not suit him. And then followed the wildest adventure of all.

Liela was sleeping. It was near morning, for the stars were beginning to grow dim and the roseate light was showing in the east when the girl was awakened by a strange, suffocating sense of danger. In an instant she was on her feet. Days before she had prepared a great stick for use in defending herself, and, grasping this, she backed into the corner of her frail hut, ready to strike.

A moment later she recognized her pet, and called him. An angry snarl answered her, and the beast leaped.

The girl realized at once that the savage instincts of the brute had been aroused, and that he had turned upon her to kill and devour her. Like a flash she swung the club, and there, alone on the island, thousands of miles from friends, the two that had been friends fought a duel to the death.

Battle with Pet Lion. Again and again the maddened beast leaped for the white throat of his mistress, and each time was driven back by a blow, and finally, as her strength was deserting her, Liela swung the club with an effort born of despair and laid the half grown cub senseless, and before it could recover, she killed it, and then sank down sobbing beside its body.

Her last friend was gone, and she was alone. So she sobbed until daylight, and then with sharp stones she skinned the beast, and cooked part of it for her breakfast.

found on the beach during her tour around the island, and every bit of this she dragged up the beach, beyond the reach of the waves, that were still breaking high.

Her first work was to plant a piece of driftwood on the highest point of the island and float a distress signal from it.

Then, selecting a spot in the wind-twisted grove of palm trees near the edge of the pond, she started to build a shelter. She had no tools, and for days she labored, using a piece of board for a shovel and her hands, and eventually she managed to erect a sort of hut by planting the pieces of driftwood and stones against the outside. Over this she stretched the largest piece of sail, and she and Mons had a home. There she carried everything that drifted ashore.

For days she was on the verge of despair. Alone in the middle of a great ocean, practically without food or shelter, her only companion a lion cub the

She felt that she must keep busy or go mad, so, after the first six months, she began to build herself a home of stones—two rooms. She spent months selecting stones of the right shape, and piling them one upon the other, and across the top she placed the boards that had been the sides of her first home, and she thatched it all over with leaves from the trees and with grasses.

She searched the island over and planted little vines and flowers. Near the end of the first year, as she counted time, using stones in small piles, one stone to each day, she had a fright. No rain had fallen for weeks, and the little pond began to go dry. Day after day she watched it dwindle away. Finally, it was a tiny pool of muddy, unpalatable water, and she retired that night in despair, and during the night rain poured and filled the pond again. The fruit from the palm trees, a species of edible root, some delicate seaweed that she found, oysters, a species of shrimp, and fish constituted her main diet, although



at rare intervals she caught a gull, and once she caught a small green parrot. Hope still lived. She believed that some day she would be saved. Her only hardship was loneliness, and she talked, or sang to herself to keep her mind busy, and she climbed to the top of the trees and sat there gazing out across the sea.

She was in a tree top one afternoon when she was rescued. She was sitting lazily southward toward the familiar speck day-dreaming of her beautiful France, and wondering whether the ever would see it again. She had been there for hours, when suddenly she gasped and almost fell out of the tree top. She heard voices.

A moment later, with a cry that startled the sailors, she slid and jumped down the tree, and rushing towards them across the sand, laughed and cried and laughed again, begging them to speak to her. One of the sailors spoke French. He told her they were from the trading schooner *Cyprus* and would take her aboard.

Then the strange, sun-browned, grass-garbed beauty fell still laughing, fell fainting upon the sand, and before she recovered she had her little store of tools she had made, were safe on board the vessel, bound for Noumea, New Caledonia, and, eventually, France, where the happy family was reunited.

## COFFIN SUIT FATAL TO TEN Men Who Engage in Fight Over Property Given to Undertaker Struck Down Mysteriously.

Galveston, Tex.—Death from a strange malady which physicians say they have never before seen or heard of has overtaken ten men who were connected with the suit over a piece of property given to an undertaker by a widow in payment for her husband's coffin. The belief is widespread in this vicinity that the deaths are a judgment from heaven. So terrifying have been the manifestations of what is believed to be divine wrath that even the county officials refuse to have anything more to do with the case, which probably never will be adjudicated, at least in the present generation.

The case is that of George E. Smith against John Bailey. Both men died soon after suit was brought of the strange disease which specialists were unable to diagnose or treat. Then Thomas Brick, the district clerk who filed the suit, fell a victim to the same mysterious avenger.

Three lawyers participated in the "widow's coffin suit," as it is called—Clegg Stewart, Forester Rose and William T. Austin. Within a few days all three became ill and died of the peculiar disease for which no remedy could be found. Then Judge William H. Stewart, who tried the case and who but a few days before had rendered a decision in the case and granted a new trial, fell a victim, and in a short time expired.

Alexander Barlingesck and C. A. Sias were employed to survey the land in preparation for the new trial. Scarcely had they completed their task when they fell ill and died.

J. F. Simons, the district clerk, laughed at the fears of the superstitious, and made preparations for the new trial. A few days later he died,

## FOR THE CONVALESCENT.

Here is a Number of Dishes Suitable for Folk Recovering from Various Ailments.

Corn Tea.—Parch common corn until browned through, grind and pour on boiling water. Drink with or without cream. This is excellent for nausea, etc.

Buttermilk Pop.—A man who was suffering from dyspepsia was cured by this "pop." Put one quart of buttermilk in the milk boiler. When nearly boiling add two tablespoons of flour which has been rubbed with one teaspoonful of milk. Stir until it boils. A diet of this "pop" is also excellent for nervous dyspepsia.

Macaroni Soup.—Into a quart of boiling water put a handful of macaroni broken into inch pieces. Let it boil an hour, then add two cups of strained stewed tomatoes and just before serving pour in a half cup of cream.

Sago Currant Jelly.—Soak in cold water five tablespoonfuls of sago one hour; strain off the water, add a half pint currant juice (strained), boil slowly 15 minutes, stirring occasionally, and add half a cup of sugar. Pour into molds and serve the following day. Cranberries or other acid fruits may be used. Tempting dish for an invalid.

Oatmeal Snaps.—Mix one cupful of sweet cream and three tablespoonfuls of sugar, and add fine oatmeal until stiff; knead slightly, roll to the thickness of one-eighth of an inch; cut in shapes; bake crisp in a moderate oven.

Codfish Toast.—Toast graham bread or gems; lay upon a platter and cover with codfish prepared in milk.

Tomato Toast.—Stew one quart of tomatoes; season with one tablespoonful of sugar and half a teaspoon of salt. Pour over gems or graham bread toasted. Note: Never use white bread for toast when you can find unboltered or entire wheat flour, for it becomes doughy and is far less nutritious.

Cracker Omelet.—Break one quart of oyster crackers in small pieces; pour over them one pint of hot milk with half a teaspoonful of salt. Stir three eggs well beaten and put into a hot skillet. Cook slowly for ten minutes, frequently stirring to prevent scorching.—N. Y. World.

## PRETTY NIGHT-GOWNS.

A Very Long Shoulder and a Very Short Sleeve Is Now Considered the Thing.

As has been fashionable for some time, most of the new night robes are made very long on the shoulders, with yokes or yoke effects and sleeves reaching half way to the elbow. Many of the sleeves are little more than ruffles of lace or embroidery in appearance, but actually they are shaped well in to the arm toward the top. All well-made nightgowns are shaped in very decidedly at the waist line. Square, pointed and round, slightly low necks are popular, and are finished around the top with flat insertion or frills through which ribbon is run.

Smocking has taken the place of fine tucks as a supplementary decoration to the lace and embroidery in many of the new gowns. Rows of puffing between which there are insertions is also a popular mode of trimming, but neither smocking nor puffing imitations so well as the fine tucks unless great care is used, and consequently the tucks will continue to be more or less popular. Beading is used somewhat sparingly on the new lingerie. More than one row of ribbon is rarely seen on the imported garments, either the night robes or underwear.

One of the handsomest of the night robes recently seen in Paris was made with a very low, square neck with back and front and mandarin sleeves flat at the top and broadening toward the bottom. A perfectly flat trimming of guipure was laid around the armhole, where the sleeve joined the gown. Six square motifs of guipure trimmed the front of the gown, being put on in two rows on either side the opening flap. Six of these motifs decorated each sleeve, two of them being placed on the two points of the sleeves. Around the lower edge of the sleeves was a very broad and handsome band of embroidery.—Chicago Record-Herald.

## Neckwear.

Stocks, turn-over collars and cuffs, are worn as much as ever, and the dainty hand-embroidered sets make very attractive presents. They can be made of either heavy or sheer linen, and are usually worked in white mercerized cotton, but I have seen very pretty ones, embroidered in the deep blues, and in the Persian shades. The straight collar does not fit well, as a rule, so in choosing a design see that it curves slightly. The newest cuff is quite deep, though the narrow ones are still worn. One particularly pretty set I saw, had a design of large dots done in deep blue, pale blue, green, pink and violet. The edge was straight and was buttonholed in dark blue.

## Potatoes and Cheese.

Cut some boiled potatoes into slices and prepare a sauce of one cupful of milk thickened with one tablespoonful of flour and with two tablespoonfuls of butter added, and mix with one cupful of grated cheese, a little cayenne, two teaspoonfuls of mustard. Line a dish with croûtons, arrange around them a close row of the potato slices, and cover with the sauce; repeat in alternate layers, covering the whole with sauce; sprinkle lightly with grated cheese and very brown croûtons, and bake in the oven for about 20 minutes.

## THE TIRED HOUSEWIFE.

Simple Life All Right, But It Does Not Mean a Woman Must Do All Her Own Work.

There is more than one feminine view of the simple life. One woman lives it by doing her own work and scrubbing her own floors as she did when her husband was at bottom salary. And yet she buys furs which run into the hundreds, and wears other things in proportion. She would rather work to "feel that she can have things," is her explanation, although her husband would like to try a regime of that open house which a good housekeeper, well assisted in the kitchen, can make a delight to the change guest.

Another couple live in an extra large and beautiful flat. The wife works all the time to keep it immaculate, doing the cleaning herself. They follow the chilly way of going out to meals because she is not strong enough to do everything and because it is cheaper and there is a little more to put in the flat.

The ideal of pleasure and expenditure in both cases is its own commentary on what the training of sink routine may become if the divine longing to learn and know has not already been implanted.

When the wife's contribution of work is to the health or education or development of another it can only react in blessing to herself. When it is a matter of strenuous economy it is often as helpful in shutting out the irritating contact with those who are merely idle triflers as it is in actual saving.

But when there is not actual need the woman who has the best good of her family and herself at heart should stop and take an inventory of what it means to her. It is the narrowing of opportunity. There is shutting down of part of the hospitality. The husband, instead of bringing home an unexpected friend to dinner, will often entertain him downtown.

The wife cannot linger at the little afternoon tea to which she has been invited on account of having to hurry home to start dinner. She can't enjoy the caller who drops in late or join the children's French class after school for the same reason.

It means that the dead level of tiredness from getting the dinner and doing up the dishes comes just at the time when her husband suggests a walk. If when money tightness causes the extra is being put into furniture and clothes and outside dinners it is not the simple life which is lived by working and saving. There was an older cult which expressed the meaning of that popular phrase more explicitly if less tersely. It was "plain living and high thinking," and it surely included plain dressing. But there was nothing in it to prevent the plain virgins being beautifully served or the well-trained attendance of a maid. The picture of it is one somehow in which the wife and husband together can take a little gracious, if austere, leisure in which there is an observance of the amenities and ceremonies.—Washington Star.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

Hearthstones, if painted with two or three coats of white enamel, will only require to be wiped with a damp cloth when soiled.

Varnished paint can be kept looking as bright as though freshly done by soaking in water some time a rag filled with flaxseed, and then using it as a cloth to clean the paint.

Never rinse white lace in blue water under the impression that this will improve the color. Real lace should be finally rinsed in skim milk, which will give it the soft, creamy tint so much admired.

When cleaning grates, add half a dozen drops of turpentine to the black lead, stir well, and a beautiful polish will be the result when finished. It also keeps stoves from rusting when not in use.

A mixture, composed of equal parts of turpentine and linseed oil, will remove white marks on furniture caused by water; rub it in with a soft rag and wipe off with a perfectly clean duster.

Iron rust on marble can be removed by rubbing with lemon juice. Another help for it and other stains, is to mix one ounce of finely powdered chalk, one ounce of pumice stone and two ounces of soda; mix with water and rub the mixture over the stains until they disappear.

An excellent polish for floors is made of half a pound of beeswax, shaved, put into a gallon pot and covered with turpentine; stand by the fire to dissolve. When using, put some on a flannel, and afterward brush with rather a stiff brush, such, for instance, as a scrubbing or boot brush.—People's Home Journal.

## Colored Spats.

Colored cloth gaiters are worn a great deal, especially with patent leather shoes, which every one knows are very cold things. The spats go far towards supplying necessary warmth, and are besides an addition to the toilet. It is possible to get spats to match almost any shade of the fashionable colors, but it cannot be denied that the most effective spats are brown, black, dark blue or gray. Red, green or purple ones are far from becoming, as a rule, and as for the shepherds' plaids they increase the size of the feet, and that is enough to say of them, since the modern woman has a sufficiently large foot already.



ing from a high wire, and the other boy, weak and sickly, never went for an athletic, so he was sent to school and then into the priesthood, and he was the pride of his mother's heart.

But Liela, from her earliest childhood, took to the ropes and the rings and the bars as if by second nature, and before she was 12 years old her feats of daring and strength and agility won her applause and caused her father to believe her the most wonderful acrobat in all the world. She was strong, healthy, beautiful—beautiful, as more than one young man thought, who saw her at the little country fairs in Breton.

But the Ponquets were poor. They made but little money at the fairs, and they talked often of America or of Australia, so at the end of one season they decided to cast their fortunes in a new world. There was a sad leave-taking with the son, who soon was to become a priest, and they sailed away to Australia.

After a short, despairing struggle reached land and threw herself, exhausted, upon the sand.

When she awakened it was dark. She felt something warm upon her face, and, starting up in alarm, found Mons, her pet lion, licking her face. The lion had been cast ashore, and although one of his legs was badly hurt, he was still alive, and together the exhausted girl and the crippled lion lay down and slept.

That was the first night of 553 that the young girl and the lion lived on the speck of land in the center of the vast ocean.

Liela did not know then, or until she was rescued, where she was, but the little speck in the sea upon which they had been cast was one of the minute islands northward of the Bellona reefs, towards the Chesterfield Islands, and from the south side of their little island home the girl could see palm trees on another island southward.

Builds Home for Herself.